United Nations ST/IC/2007/40

Secretariat

11 October 2007

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **Time off for voting on United States Election Day**

1. Staff members of United States nationality wishing to exercise their right to vote on Tuesday, 6 November 2007, should try to do so outside their normal working hours. Those who are unable to do so may ask the executive officer of their department or office for up to two hours of time off. Executive officers will grant any such requests consistent with the exigencies of the service.

2. Any absence from duty not specifically authorized, including any absence beyond the allowable two-hour maximum, will be treated in accordance with the provisions of staff rule 105.1 (b) (ii).

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 9 November 2007.

07-53937 (E) 171007

United Nations ST/IC/2007/41

Secretariat

18 October 2007

Information circular*

To: Members of delegations and staff

From: The Under-Secretary-General for Management

Subject: **First day of issue, 25 October 2007: "Space for Humanity" stamps and souvenir sheets and 2007 annual collection folders**

Commemorative stamps and souvenir sheets

1. On Thursday, 25 October 2007, the United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) will issue a set of six commemorative stamps and three souvenir sheets on the theme "Space for Humanity". The stamps and souvenir sheets were designed by Donato Giancola.

2. The stamps, in a mini-sheet format of six stamps on each sheet, will be issued in denominations of $0.41, $0.90, SwF 1.00, SwF 1.80, €0.65 and €1.15. The three souvenir sheets will be issued in denominations of $1.00, SwF 3.00 and €2.10. In conjunction with World Space Week 2007, a special overprinted souvenir sheet, in the denomination of $1.00, will also be issued on 25 October 2007. An ultraviolet luminescent mark is incorporated on both the stamps and the souvenir sheets.

(United States equivalents: SwF 1.00: $0.82; SwF 1.80: $1.48; SwF 3.00: $2.46; €0.65: $0.87; €1.15: $1.55; and €2.10: $2.83, subject to exchange rate fluctuation.)

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 25 November 2007.

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Space for Humanity — fiftieth anniversary of the space age

3. The United Nations General Assembly declared in 1999 that World Space Week would be held each year from 4 to 10 October. According to the General Assembly, the purpose of World Space Week is to encourage, educate people about and support space exploration and to celebrate annually at the international level the contribution that space science and technology can make to the betterment of the human condition. The theme for World Space Week 2007 is "50 years in space". For more information about World Space Week and its related activities, please visit www.spaceweek.org.

2007 annual collection folders

4. The New York, Geneva and Vienna annual collection folders of single mint stamps and souvenir sheets issued in 2007 will also be released on Thursday, 25 October 2007. It should be noted that the 2007 Flag series stamps, the 2007 Endangered Species series stamps and the 2007 Coin and Flag series stamps **will not** be included in the individual New York, Geneva or Vienna annual collection folders. They are contained in their own separate albums, previously issued in February, March and May 2007, respectively.

General information

5. For the convenience of collectors, UNPA at Headquarters will provide prepared and cancelled New York, Geneva and Vienna first-day covers on the UNPA official first-day cachets **only**. Members of delegations and staff can obtain these items on Thursday, 25 October 2007, at the following locations:

(a) The UNPA sales counter in the concourse of the General Assembly Building, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.;

(b) A temporary sales counter located on the east side of the Secretariat lobby, in front of the windows between the cafeteria and the news-stand, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

6. First-day-of-issue cancellations can be obtained at a temporary United States Postal Service substation located outside the United Nations Bookshop in the concourse of the General Assembly Building, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

7. Information on United Nations stamps can be accessed on the Internet at http://unstamps.un.org.

United Nations ST/IC/2007/42

Secretariat

22 October 2007

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff at Headquarters

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **Language and communications programme at Headquarters — 2008**

1. Language courses in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish are organized in order to promote linguistic balance and multilingualism within the Secretariat and to improve the language capabilities of its staff as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolutions 2480 B (XXIII), 43/224 D and 50/11. The purpose of these courses is to provide staff members with the opportunity to learn the official languages of the Organization and to use them in their work. To further enhance the ability of staff members to perform their jobs with greater competence and to expand their linguistic skills for professional development, special courses that concentrate on a specific area of expertise, such as drafting or presentations, are offered.

2. The purpose of the present circular is to advise staff members of the registration dates and schedules for the United Nations language and communications programme at Headquarters.

I. 2008 course calendar

3. The 2008 course calendar is as follows:

(a) *January 2008 term*

Language classes:	7 January-28 March
End-of-term examinations:	31 March-4 April

(b) *April 2008 term*

Language classes:	21 April-11 July
End-of-term examinations:	14-18 July

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 31 December 2008.

07-55703 (E) 261007

(c) *September 2008 term*

Language classes:	8 September-28 November
End-of-term examinations:	1-5 December

II. Registration

4. The registration schedule for language and communications courses is as follows:

(a) *Registration for the January 2008 term*

29 October-9 November 2007

(b) *Registration for the April 2008 term*

25 February-7 March 2008

(c) *Registration for the September 2008 term*

9-20 June 2008

25-29 August 2008

Registration procedure

5. New participants may enrol for a language course during the registration period in room DC2-200, between 10 a.m. and noon, or in room S-606, on the 6th floor of the Secretariat building, between 1.30 and 3.30 p.m. Those who have some prior knowledge of the language they wish to study must make an appointment for a placement test when they register. Students may not register for more than two courses (one regular or accelerated course and one special course or two special courses) without the permission of the coordinator.

6. Once registered, participants will be given an opportunity in class, before the end-of-term examination, to renew their registration for regular courses in subsequent terms. Participants are advised that, if they fail to register at that time, they may be dropped from the programme unless they have submitted a written explanation of their special circumstances to the appropriate language coordinator.

7. All participants, whether new or continuing, who wish to take part in regular classes or special courses must register in room S-606 or room DC2-200. In the case of special courses, if a specific one is oversubscribed, priority will be given to staff members and applicants who have not taken the course before.

8. Returning participants who have been absent from a course of study for two terms or more will be required to take a placement test in order to re-enrol in the programme.

Language of study

9. Prospective participants are advised to exercise particular care in choosing the language in which they wish to take either a regular or an accelerated course, as they may register for only one such course each term and may not interrupt a course of study in one language in order to begin studying another without the prior authorization of the Staff Development Officer (Multilingualism) of the language

and communications programme. Students in the programme must write to the Staff Development Officer to request such a change.

Notification of enrolment

10. Staff members and other participants whose registration is current or who have enrolled during the designated registration period should check the class lists, which will be posted on the 6th floor of the Secretariat building, in the SA-B classroom area and on the 2nd floor of the DC-2 building during the week before the beginning of each term.

Cancellation of registration

11. Participants who believe that they will be unable to complete the course in which they are enrolled and wish to withdraw must do so by completing the change-of-registration form in room S-606 between 1.30 and 3.30 p.m. within the first two weeks of the term. If those students wish to re-register for the same course in a subsequent term, they must do so in person during the designated registration period. Paying participants who cancel their registration after this two-week period will be considered participants for the term and will be charged the full fee for each course in which they have registered (i.e., no tuition fees are refunded after the second week of classes). Furthermore, they will be treated as repeaters when they register for the same course in a subsequent term. A student who attends more than 75 per cent (9 of 12 weeks) of the classes but fails the end-of-term exam or prefers to repeat the level may have the repeater's fee waived. In the case of special courses, as long as a student has attended more than 75 per cent of the classes, he or she may repeat the special course as long as there is space available. A student who attends less than 75 per cent of the special course may not re-enrol the following term unless the absences were due to illness (certified) or an unplanned mission, for which an explanatory note from the supervisor is required.

12. Rates applicable since 2006 are as follows: five-hour courses, **$550**; four-hour courses, **$500**; three-hour courses, **$450**; two-hour courses, **$300**; and one-hour courses, **$150**.

III. Language courses

13. Three types of language courses are offered each term: regular, accelerated and special. In addition, the language and communications programme designs and conducts special job-related language courses to meet specific language needs at the request of departments.

Regular courses

14. Regular courses meet for one-hour periods, three or four times a week, depending on the level. Regular courses offered in the evenings meet twice a week for 1 1/2 hours. Classes are offered at the following times:

Before work:	8.30 a.m.
Lunch hour:	12 noon, 1 p.m. and 2 p.m.
After work:	5.45 p.m. (6.15 p.m. during the General Assembly session)

A pilot project will be conducted by the French programme in January 2008 whereby some courses will be offered at different times (e.g., 11.30 a.m.) and/or for different durations (e.g., 2 hours twice a week). Additional information or details are available from the French language coordinator.

15. Not all levels of a given language are offered at each of these times. Draft schedules, posted in room S-606, should be consulted at the time of registration. Every effort will be made to place registrants according to the time preferences they indicate; however, since the number of places in lunch-hour courses is limited, there is no guarantee that registrants will be given the time they have chosen.

Accelerated courses

16. Accelerated courses are offered as an intensive alternative to the regular programme. Classes meet five days a week from 8.30 to 9.30 a.m.

IV. Special communications skills

17. Special courses have been developed to address the need of the Organization for staff members to develop their communication skills for work-related purposes, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the strategy for the management of the Organization's human resources and other human resources management issues (A/59/263).

18. The writing skills component of the communications programme addresses the need to improve the drafting expertise of staff members whose functions require them to draft in a working language of the Organization. Writing workshops, which include courses in drafting letters and memorandums (English and French) and report writing, may take place from 3 to 5 p.m. or from 5.45 to 7.45 p.m. (6.15 to 8.15 p.m. during the General Assembly) one day a week. In addition, presentation skills courses (English and French) are offered to develop the ability of staff members to speak more effectively before groups. Special language workshops that enable participants to focus on and improve their abilities in specific skill areas are offered on a rotating basis. At the time of registration, participants may check which workshops are available in the language they wish to study.

19. For a description of these courses, staff members are requested to consult the Staff Development Programme site of the Office of Human Resources Management (http://iseek.un.org/m210.asp?dept=551) on the United Nations Intranet under the heading "Learning Section/Staff Development Programme Descriptions" or the Staff Development Programme booklet.

V. Additional information

Lunch-hour attendance of language courses

20. Supervisors are requested to permit staff members who attend classes during their lunch hour 20 minutes for a quick meal before resuming their work.

Absenteeism

21. Participants are advised that those who fail to attend class during the first week of the term will be dropped from the class list and that their places may be allotted to persons on the waiting list unless they have informed the language coordinator in writing. Absences from class during the term should be explained in writing to the appropriate language coordinator.

Course materials

22. Participants will be informed on the first day of class of the materials that will be used during the course. Textbooks assigned for specific language courses may be available for purchase under special arrangements with vendors or in the United Nations bookshop, located in room GA-032A in the General Assembly building. Language coordinators will advise students how to obtain course materials.

End-of-term examinations

23. Examination schedules are posted during the last month of classes. Participants are advised that examinations are an integral and mandatory part of the language programme. Participants who do not sit for the end-of-term examination will be dropped from the programme unless they have submitted an adequate written explanation to the appropriate coordinator in advance of their absence.

24. Examinations are given after the last week of classes for regular and accelerated courses to determine whether a participant will move on to a higher level or repeat the course. The examinations consist of written and oral components, both of which participants must pass to be able to go on to the next level. Participants who fail a course may arrange to have a general discussion of the results of their examination by making an appointment with the appropriate language coordinator one week after the beginning of a term.

25. Participants who are prevented by compelling circumstances from taking the examination as scheduled and who wish to request a make-up examination must write a memorandum to the coordinator of the language they are studying and complete a request form.

26. Participants who choose to repeat a level irrespective of their grade on the final examination should inform their teacher accordingly at the end of the course period in order to be re-enrolled at the same level. A repeater's fee will be charged.

Language proficiency examination

27. The United Nations language proficiency examination is the official test of a staff member's knowledge of a language and may be taken both by participants who have completed the last level of a language course and by staff members who have achieved proficiency from outside sources. The application to take this examination must be made separately. Further details are available at www.unlpe.org.

VI. Enquiries

28. The information desk in the Secretariat building, located in room S-606, is open for enquiries Monday to Thursday from 1.30 to 3.30 p.m. The website address is www.un.org/depts/OHRM/sds/lcp/.

29. The following is a list of telephone numbers to call for information:

Javier Zanón
Staff Development Officer, language and communications programme:
[Number not yet assigned; please consult Directory]

Joyce Lewis-Swensson
Staff Development Assistant, language and communications programme:
212 963 8928

Joseph Vukas
Training Assistant, language and communications programme:
212 963 7056

For pedagogical enquiries or to arrange appointments, please contact:

Samia Montasser, Arabic programme: 212 963 9506

Yong Ho, Chinese programme: 212 963 2481

Carlos Islam, English programme: 212 963 2985

Emmanuel Soyer, French programme: 212 963 7019

Alla Padalka, Russian programme: 212 963 7063

Eva García, Spanish programme: 212 963 7026

Teachers' room (1B-24): 212 963 2188

Teachers' room (DC2-0203): 212 963 2480

Fax machine number for the language and communications programme office, room S-606: 212 963 6016

The office hours of language coordinators are posted outside rooms S-606 and DC2-200.

Annex

Note verbale dated 2 March 2007 from the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The United States Mission to the United Nations presents its compliments to the United Nations Secretariat and refers to the question of staffing United Nations peacekeeping or other unaccompanied missions with Headquarters staff. The United States supports extending for a period of up to two years the period that experienced United Nations staff members handling difficult, limited-term peacekeeping or other missions abroad can remain registered with the United States Mission as staff members with a permanent duty station of New York, provided that the staff member has a position at United Nations Headquarters to which he or she will return at the expiration of the two-year period.

The United States Mission to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the United Nations Secretariat the assurances of its highest consideration.

United Nations ST/IC/2007/44

Secretariat

23 October 2007

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **2008 national competitive recruitment examinations**

1. The purpose of the present information circular is to invite applications from staff members in the General Service and related categories of the United Nations Secretariat who wish to take the national competitive recruitment examinations at the P-2 level in 2008, in accordance with the provisions of administrative instruction ST/AI/1997/1. Further details, including descriptions of occupational groups and sample papers, can be obtained from the following website: http://www.un.org/Depts/OHRM/examin/exam.htm.

2. The 2008 national competitive recruitment examinations will be held on 26 February 2008 in the following P-2 occupational groups: environment, finance, human rights, information technology, political affairs, programme evaluation and statistics.

3. A list of participating Member States and the occupational groups offered to each Member State is contained in the annex to the present circular.

4. Staff members who meet the conditions set out in administrative instruction ST/AI/1997/1 may apply by completing the attached application form and an updated Personal History (P11) or Personal History Profile (PHP), found in the Galaxy system, and forwarding them, by 12 December 2007, to: 2008 NCRE (Staff members), Examinations and Tests Section, Room S-2575E, Division for Organizational Development, Office of Human Resources Management. The most recent performance appraisal form (PAS) and copies of all university degrees obtained must be attached to the application. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 31 December 2008.

07-56325 (E) 291007

United Nations application form for the 2008 national competitive recruitment examination for General Service staff members of the United Nations Secretariat only

Section I
Personal data

Last name: _____ Room No.: _____ Ext.: _____

First name: _____ Index No.: _____

E-mail: _____ Nationality: _____

Gender: _____ Grade: _____ Duty station: _____

Department: _____ Appointment: _____

EOD date: _____ Expiration date: _____

Date of birth: _____

Section II
Type of examination

Occupational group (one only): _____

Latest copy of performance appraisal (PAS) attached: _____

Period covered in PAS: _____

Copies of degrees attached: _____

Updated P11 or PHP attached: _____

This application, together with the documentation requested in section II, should be submitted by 12 December 2007 to the Examinations and Tests Section, Division for Organizational Development, Room S-2575E. Applications may also be submitted by e-mail (OHRM_ets@un.org) or faxed to +1-212-963-3683.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Annex

List of Member States participating in the 2008 national competitive recruitment examination programme and the occupational groups offered to each Member State

Countries	*Occupational groups*
Afghanistan	Environment
Angola	Finance
Antigua and Barbuda	Human rights
Botswana	Information technology
Brunei Darussalam	Political affairs
Cambodia	Programme evaluation
Cape Verde	Statistics
Congo	
Costa Rica	
Dominica	
Dominican Republic	
Ecuador	
Equatorial Guinea	
Gabon	
Grenada	
Haiti	
Honduras	
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	
Japan	
Lesotho	
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	
Lithuania	
Malawi	
Maldives	
Micronesia (Federated States of)	
Moldova	
Montenegro	
Morocco	
Mozambique	
Namibia	
Oman	
Palau	
Papua New Guinea	
Republic of Korea	
Saint Lucia	
Samoa	
Sierra Leone	
Slovenia	

Countries	*Occupational groups*
Solomon Islands	
Suriname	
Tajikistan	
Tonga	
Tuvalu	
Vanuatu	
Viet Nam	
Yemen	
Andorra	Environment
Denmark	Finance
Liechtenstein	Information technology
Monaco	Political affairs
Norway	Programme evaluation
San Marino	Statistics
United States of America	
Mexico	Environment
	Human rights
	Political affairs

United Nations ST/IC/2007/45

Secretariat

24 October 2007

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **Official holidays for 2008 at United Nations Headquarters**

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/214 A of 22 December 1997 and decision 52/468 of 31 March 1998, the 10 official holidays for 2008 at Headquarters have been designated as follows:

1 January	New Year's Day
18 February	President's Day
21 March	Good Friday
26 May	Memorial Day
4 July	Independence Day
1 September	Labour Day
30 September	Eid al-Fitr (observed)
27 November	Thanksgiving Day
8 December	Eid al-Adha
25 December	Christmas Day

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 31 December 2008.

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